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Director of
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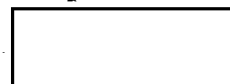
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National Intelligence Daily (Cable)

18 January 1979

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EGYPT-SUDAN: Unity Talks

Recent high-level Egyptian-Sudanese discussions, and a scheduled visit to Khartoum by President Sadat later this week, underscore Egypt's interest in maintaining close relations with Sudan and ensuring the stability of President Numayri's regime. Further moves toward increased political and economic integration seem likely, but will stop short of full unity. [REDACTED]

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The latest round of bilateral talks resulted in a number of economic and technical agreements. Sadat sees such integration efforts as a way to enhance Egyptian influence in Sudan and to help strengthen the country against external threats. Sadat is deeply concerned about radical-leftist activities and intentions in the Arabian Peninsula and Africa, and he gives the highest priority to ensuring continuation of a friendly government in Khartoum. [REDACTED]

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Numayri, for his part, regards Egyptian political and economic support as a counter to pressures from the radical regimes in Libya and Ethiopia. Many Sudanese, however, see increased Egyptian influence as a threat to Sudanese independence and will oppose full political unity with Egypt. [REDACTED]

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FRANCE: Defense Budget

The 1979 French defense budget of about \$18 billion reflects France's continued emphasis on upgrading its military forces. The budget represents a real increase of nearly 5 percent, when adjusted for inflation, over last year's budget--well above the NATO target of 3 percent. French defense expenditures have doubled since 1974. France is seeking to increase its combat capabilities by reorganizing existing forces while keeping personnel levels about the same, and by introducing new weapon systems, such as tactical nuclear weapons and new ships. France is also purchasing additional transport aircraft for overseas intervention forces. Only volunteer regiments can be sent overseas without prior approval by the National Assembly, however, and this continues to limit French capabilities to intervene rapidly, since the Army is composed largely of draftees. [REDACTED]

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UN: North-South Overview Committee

A one-week meeting of the controversial UN Committee of the Whole that oversees discussions between industrialized and developing countries on international economic issues opens today in New York. Although the developing countries have not focused on specific objectives for the meeting, they may try to test the recent UN General Assembly agreement that allows the committee to negotiate some unresolved North-South economic issues. The last meeting, in September 1978, was suspended when the US strongly resisted this expanded role for the committee. Most Western countries are sending low-level representatives to underscore their view that the committee should play a relatively minor role. [REDACTED]

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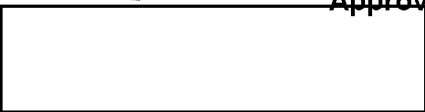
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